

REMARKS

Present Status of the Application

The Office action rejected claims 1, 5, and 7~9 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Hishikawa (US 6808161 B1; hereinafter “Hishikawa”).

The Office action rejected claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hishikawa.

The Office action rejected claims 11~15 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hishikawa in view of Schneider (US 5836967; hereinafter “Schneider”).

In response thereto, Applicants have amended claims 1, 7, 11, 13 and 15 to more clearly define the claimed invention and respectfully traverse all the rejections on the ground set forth in detail below. Applicants respectfully submit that all the pending claims 1, 5~9, 11~15 are placed in proper condition for allowance, and reconsideration of all the pending claims is respectfully requested.

Response to Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(e)

Claims 1, 5, and 7~9 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Hishikawa.

In response thereto, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 7 to more clearly define the claimed invention and respectfully traverse all said rejections on the grounds set forth in detail below.

Claims 1, 7, 11, 13 and 15, as amended according to FIGs. 1a and 1b and paragraph [0041]~[0050] of the specification, contain the technical features reciting: "...wherein, the sealing valve is made of an elastic material, and is provided with an approximately semispherical portion being directed outward convexly and having a valve hole at a center thereof, and the..."(Emphasis Added).

Both Hishikawa and Schneider fail to disclose or teach the technical feature ("semispherical portion being directed outward convexly") of currently amended Independent claims 1, 7, 11, 13 and 15 and accordingly traverse the rejections of claims 1, 5 and 7~9 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e).

Since independent claims 1, 7, 11, 13 and 15 are allowable, claims dependent thereon should also be allowed as a matter of law for they contain all of the limitations of their respective independent claim. In re Fine, 837 F.2d 1071 (Fed. Cir. 1988).

Response to Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hishikawa.

Claims 11~15 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hishikawa in view of Schneider.

In response thereto, Applicants have amended claims 1, 7, 11, 13 and 15 to more clearly define the claimed invention and respectfully traverse all said rejections on the grounds set forth in detail below.

As mentioned above, Hishikawa and Schneider both fail to disclose or teach the technical feature of claims 1, 7, 11, 13 and 15 reciting: "...wherein, the sealing valve is made of an elastic material, and is provided with an approximately semispherical portion being directed outward convexly and having a valve hole at a center thereof, and the..." (**Emphasis Added**).

Hence, the combination of Hishikawa and Schneider still fails to disclose or teach said technical feature. Applicants thereby respectfully assert that claims 1, 7, 11, 13 and 15 are patentable over Hishikawa and Schneider, taken alone or in combination.

Applicants respectfully submit that the grounds on which the Office action rejected claims 6 and 11~15 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are no longer valid, and accordingly traverse the rejection of claims 6 and 11~15 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Since independent claims 1, 7, 11, 13 and 15 are allowable, claims dependent thereon should also be allowed as a matter of law for they contain all of the limitations of their respective independent claim. *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988).

CONCLUSION

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is believed that all the pending claims 1, 5~9, 11~15 of the present application patently define over the prior art and are in proper condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite the examination of the above-identified patent application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,
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